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THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART.

IN TWO ARTICLES—FIRST ARTICLE.

As a result of extended and intelligent labor, the present and eighth of the semi-annual loan exhibitions of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, undoubtedly surpasses, in more than one respect, the average of others preceding it. A richer array of treasures has hardly been offered to view in the building at any previous period than such as engage attention both in the department of pictures and in that of other objects of art. Of the different new collections of the latter class that of Chinese and Japanese pottery belonging to Mr. Henry G. Marquand, which is arranged in the main hall, is most esteemed, and regarding which Mr. Prime informs us that from a first examination he judges the collection to be the most valuable of any in this country as a representation of works in pure color. There exists, he adds, but very few pieces in the world like an exquisite rose pink vase of the Ming period having a place in one of these groups. The production is of the kind classed by different authorities with the rubies, although more frequently designated as rose by the French. This single gem is prized by the author of "Pottery and Porcelain" at no less a money value than \$2,000. In the case with this precious rose production are two or three soufflé vases of fine metallic lustre, which are highly valued by their owner; and a very important group of pieces in mustard yellow includes rare specimens of which one with a greenish cast is most unique. A series of tea-colored or eel-skin vases of fine form and texture are valuable examples of the class, and three vases in pure black with the brilliancy of jet are to be counted as treasures. Others in liver color and in beef blood are representative specimens of considerable value.

Another group consisting of five blue and white hawthorn vases, shown in one of the cases toward the north side of the room is of exceedingly fine quality. In connection with these is a superb piece of perforated work in porcelain in the style usually named as rice work, from the rice grain pattern by which it is most frequently marked, although in this instance it is a floral design formed in the rare translucent paste with which through these pattern portions the simply transparent body material of the bowl is replaced, producing a most delicate and enlivened effect. Among examples of importance are also those of the old white of China, the scarcity of which is well known to many collectors. With these specimens is shown the rarest and finest manner of decoration in the paste, as of engraving beneath the glaze, with infoliations and Greek borders. The eye of the connoisseur is equally to be gratified by a superb piece of old celadon with its greenish pearl-shell tone and design engraved in the paste. This represents the admired ancient Chinese fabrication of King-teching, of which early French imitations have been historically noted. Another single specimen of extreme beauty is one in turquoise blue with design of peacock wing incised beneath the glaze and forming a splendid decoration. A valuable representation of another style is shown in a group of splashed vases of the richest color and lustre. One of these with body formed in simulation of united bamboo sticks and with elephant head handles is marked by a splendid color arrangement, while a larger vase of smooth and brilliant surface is swept with clouds and waves of color, one with another, in strange but masterly ordered confusion, and pressing through and trickling among cloudy tints a deep vermillion hue like Turner's, which "incarnadines the multitudinous sea."

Other examples may be

found here of hardly secondary interest to those mentioned, the collection being of so magnificent a character that in being enabled to view it on the convenient terms of these exhibitions the public enjoys a most inestimable privilege.

The western end of the main hall is devoted to an exhibition of the medieval glass forming the second part of the collection brought together by Mr. Charvet, and which has been only recently received from Madame Charvet, his widow, by its purchaser, Mr. Marquand. This added portion numbers two hundred and fifty pieces of Venitian and French glass, probably from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, and of which examples of the former variety became a fair auxilliary toward completing a representation of this manufacture so far afforded by the Jarves collection, the gift of the consul collector to the Museum, and these two Italian series are in such contiguity as to be easily united in one study. The newly deposited Charvet Venitian glass consists of colored vases, biberons, flower necked bottles and fluted and threaded wares of various forms. The French part of the collection is the more valuable of the two as representing some of the better styles of the production, the different periods of which are frequently indicated by the design of the fleur-de-lys, the crown, or again of the cock. Apparently some of the pieces are of the Louis XIV. style, others are of the date of Louis XV. and Louis XVI. On the opening of the collection the authentic descriptive statements relative to these objects had not yet been received from Madame Charvet, and very little was to be so early determined through occasional items of internal evidence, although from a trace of iridescence, beginning to make itself visible in a few of the specimens, these were judged by General Cesnola to be about five hundred years old. Taking these different medieval additions with the exceedingly rich collection of ancient Greek and Roman glass which is permanently placed in the Museum as the gift of its director, the present exhibition in this department is highly interesting and important.

A bequest to the Museum from the late George W. Thorne forms one of the greatly valued new features of the exhibition, the collection being chiefly of European art objects of rare kinds with a few Oriental specimens in metal and carved work. A fine little group of Mympheburg porcelain is greatly admired by collectors, as is also a rare series of examples from the Zurich factory and a Berlin specimen of beautiful quality. The collection includes a large and handsome ivory tankard with bold carvings, a few admirable little statuettes in this material, engraved and painted glass, silver work in curious forms, ornaments and fine old watches of early periods, of which one, of Markam manufacture, is distinguished by a revolving dial showing at each revolution a different head which is seen at a window-like aperture formed in the case. With this bequest is exhibited the recent gift from Mr. Howard Potter of a Roman tazza in serpentine stone, with which few objects in the same department are of equal interest.

New loan centres are also established on the ground floor, of which two archaeological collections are chiefly important. One of these, which is loaned by Mr. J. H. Murtado, consists of Peruvian antiquities showing rather finer phases in pottery decoration than has been usually represented here in that class of exhibitions. Some of the most interesting specimens are in vases with black glaze, figured with birds in sunken panels, and in linked bottles with the form of an owl or other bird at the top. An illustration of American Indian art is here offered in a series of objects loaned by Dr. Robert H. Lamborn, whose greater collection, however, is formed of Mexican antiquities. Of little statuette figures of this class, and of human and animal heads which are mounted and perfectly classified, are shown no less than six hundred and sixty, the remainder of the collection including various larger figures, vases, a painting on leather and beads and implements. Here, also, are deposited two fifteenth century Florentine mantels in gray stone, which have been presented by Messrs. McKim, Mead & White, of which one shows above the fire-place opening a sculptured panel with enraged contending beasts, while the other is figured with cherub head and garlands, and with fine treatment of plan, forms on the upright side panels where on each is a vase sustaining a torch.

The loan collections of the picture galleries are made up mainly of two classes, the retrospective, and contemporary art as shown in copies from old masters, the latter occupying exclusively the second western gallery. In the other division, although the walls here and



CHINESE VASES.

there show pictures before exhibited, the presence of these, or even the absence of anything in their place could signify little with the absorbing interest of a few magnificent works recently purchased by Mr. Marquand and promptly loaned to the Museum for six months. That esteemed of most importance is the famed portrait of a burgomaster, by Rembrandt, previously in the collection of the Marquis of Lansdowne, and which—as may be stated for such as appreciate the money test of value—has cost its present owner, with duties included, no less than \$33,000. Although it is a noble group of which this forms the centre, set in draperies of deep red velvet, no other of the works can be compared with it in the finest values of art. The picture shows a face of strength and refined spiritual impression beneath a large hat, with the light striking upward from one side, full about the sensitive mouth, glancing on the farther cheek and caught again by the brow. The eyes looking out from the shadow between repeat in a higher measure the half-sad and wholly beautiful expression of the lips, and being in equal readiness to yield to tears in their shadowed retreat or to brighten forth to the exquisite receptive sense of any flitting joy. When this is said, and with all which might be added of tone and handling and definable qualities generally, the charm of the work remains untold, with its lines running to rhythm, and with every slightest touch of the canvas an almost divine inspiration. Above the Rembrandt is placed an example of Franz Hals, purchased by Mr. Marquand from the collection of the late Mr. Gils, in Antwerp, and showing a portrait of two gentlemen, of highly pleasing and rare character. A portrait of a man, representing the Dutch school, is shown on one side of the former, and on the other side is a portrait of a woman, by Jurian Ovens, a pupil of Rembrandt. Adjacent to this group of the old masters are two important copies from Velasquez, by Wm. M. Chase, one being of the celebrated Moenippus of the Spanish master, and the other of the *Æsop* copied by the American artist in Madrid in 1882. The remaining part of the valuable collection, which includes the Rembrandt, is placed at one end of this gallery; it consists of a fine toned portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds of the Hon. Miss Carew, and a portrait of rich value of the Infant Don Balthasar Carlos, painted by Velasquez in 1631, and which shows a brown eyed child with golden brown hair, and sweetly earnest and engaging expression. This work comes into the hands of its present owner from the London collection of Mr. Charles Sackville Bale. A few examples of early American painters are hung in the same room, among the most esteemed of which is the portrait by Stuart of Senator Young of Virginia, loaned by Mrs. John Pope. Among works recently acquired by the Museum is the gift of a picture by Léon y Escosura, having also a place in this room, representing an auction sale in Clinton Hall, and giving evidence of sufficiently careful study from life in the different portraits which any habitue of the Astor Place sales-rooms may easily recognize in the audience, while the picture will hardly add to the artist's reputation. The works remaining in this room from the previous exhibition are frequently of importance in themselves, as fully as those recently loaned or newly acquired by the Museum. With these is one by Eugene Jettel, presented this year, having been purchased at the San Donato sale of the Demidoff collection. Another noted picture is by Granet, which was formerly in the collection of Napoleon III. There is also a distinguished example of Albert Maignan, *L'Attendant d'Anagni*, which is retained.

